



OII Update

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This update is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to advise community members and other interested parties of recent and planned activities at the Operating Industries, Inc. (OII) Landfill Superfund Site (see Figure 1). In this fact sheet you will find information on:

- Routine Site Monitoring and Maintenance;
- Control of Leachate and Groundwater Monitoring;
- North Parcel Cleanup and Redevelopment; and
- Recovering Cleanup Costs from *De Minimis* Parties

Routine Site Monitoring and Maintenance

The maintenance of the cleanup systems at the site which contain and control landfill hazards are performed on a regular basis by the potentially responsible parties (PRPs). Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) put in place by EPA are followed by those maintaining the systems, and EPA oversees this work to make sure they are in compliance with standards set for the site. The following activities were performed during the past year:

Landfill cover inspection and repair: The landfill moncover consists of a layer of soil about four feet thick placed over a foundation layer, with a woven-like fabric between them to hold it all in place. The functions of the moncover are to cover the garbage, keep rainfall from entering the landfill, support vegetation and control gas emissions. The vegetation planted in this layer pulls water out of the soil, into the plants and then into the atmosphere. There are eight SOPs that address the monitoring and maintenance of the landfill cover. They describe and mandate continuous repairs for minor cracks that form on the landfill cover and slopes due to settlement. New Cure, Inc., the company cleaning up the site for the PRPs, routinely repairs cracks on the landfill cover resulting from the waste settling. No major settlement or erosion was observed during the past year of maintenance. In addition, the landfill vegetative cover is regularly evaluated to insure no plants that could compromise the protectiveness of the cap (e.g., species with long, deep roots), are allowed to take root at the site.

Landfill Gas Treatment System (LFGTS) maintenance and monitoring: The major objective of the LFGTS is to collect and transport landfill gas to the treatment unit located on the North Parcel. The treatment unit operates continuously 24 hours per day, seven days per week. It destroys the contaminants in the landfill gas by combustion. Daily monitoring is required to ensure the system is operating efficiently and in compliance with air emission standards. Maintenance inspections are conducted on a monthly and annual basis. In addition, electricity used to operate site systems is generated from landfill gasses through the use of micro-turbine equipment. All emissions from this equipment are captured and sent back to the gas treatment system to ensure all contaminants are destroyed.

Surface water management system maintenance: The surface water management system provides for adequate drainage and controls infiltration of water into the landfill (see Figure 2). It also helps limit erosion of the landfill cover. The system components include two collection basins, downdrains, v-ditches, undercrossings, energy dissipation boxes which slow down the water, culverts, a rip-rap channel made of rocks and chicken wire, and sediment traps. All are maintained in compliance with EPA-approved SOPs. The two on-site collection basins reduce peak stormwater runoff, limit off-site flow, protect off-site drainage routes and adjacent properties, and reduce the amount of sediment leaving the site.

Control of Leachate and Groundwater Monitoring

Water generated from the landfill, called leachate, is collected and treated at the leachate treatment plant. As part of the leachate control, EPA continues to perform long-term water monitoring activities at and around the site including quarterly, biannual and annual monitoring and sampling. The monitoring of the site water is to assure that contamination

from OII does not spread into areas of clean groundwater and that the cleanup remedy for this off-site water (natural attenuation) is progressing in a satisfactory manner.

The PRPs, with EPA oversight, have recently drilled soil borings, installed groundwater monitoring wells and taken samples next to the site boundary. Four areas have been identified around the landfill for additional study due to the presence of site-related contamination in groundwater at levels of concern. Design work is underway to determine in what areas active control of liquids is necessary to reduce impacts from the landfill on surrounding groundwater.

Please note: Residents in this area do not come in contact with this groundwater. Your drinking water comes from municipal sources not affected by the OII site.

North Parcel Cleanup and Redevelopment

For a number of months, EPA has been meeting with the City of Monterey Park and the PRPs to discuss a framework for the integration of redevelopment and the cleanup of the North Parcel. The goal was to reach an agreement that could become part of an amendment to Consent Decree 8 (CD-8). The CD-8 amendment would be the enforceable document ensuring that the PRPs would integrate the redevelopment with cleanup.

The PRPs recently decided that rather than negotiate further, they would prefer to start work under Consent Decree 3 (CD-3), which is the Consent Decree that addresses the cleanup of the North Parcel. The PRPs made a commitment that they would continue to work cooperatively with EPA and the City to ensure integration of the re-development into the cleanup. There are many attractive aspects to this proposal: work on the design could start as soon as EPA's written request to proceed under CD-3 was received; and one would not need to wait for all the legal points and issues to be resolved before cleanup work could begin. EPA followed through with its commitment to the City and the PRPs by sending a letter to the PRPs requesting that work on the North Parcel begin under CD-3. Starting this work under CD-3 can be the framework for the PRPs to begin the design process and incorporate redevelopment voluntarily.



Figure 1: OII Site from the air (July 2002)



Figure 2: Workers repairing V-ditch (stormwater run-off structure) damaged by landfill settlement (October 2003)

Recovering Cleanup Costs from *De Minimis* Parties

Under Superfund, EPA may offer a special settlement to PRPs who qualify as *de minimis* parties. For a PRP to be a *de minimis* party, the quantity of waste the party contributed to the site must be minimal in comparison to the total amount of waste sent to the site, and the toxicity of the waste must not be significantly more than that of the other contaminants at the site. *De minimis* settlements provide significant benefits to the participating parties including broader protection from lawsuits brought by other PRPs (called “Contribution Protection”). These settlements also may provide more comprehensive promises from the United States and the State of California not to issue orders or file lawsuits against the settling *de minimis* parties (called “Covenants Not to Sue”).

We will soon be sending letters to hundreds of *de minimis* companies with an offer to participate in a *de minimis* settlement with EPA in order to resolve liabilities associated with OII. EPA will schedule an informational meeting in the Los Angeles area for affected parties to learn more about OII and the *de minimis* settlement offer. The meeting is intended to help answer questions that *de minimis* parties may have about OII and the *de minimis* settlement process. The specific time and place of the informational meeting, as well as other information about the meeting, will be on the OII *de minimis* web site:

www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sfund/oii/deminimis

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Questions or concerns? Please contact:

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Call toll-free at **(800) 231-3075**. Please leave a message and your call will be returned.

Copies of site-related documents are available at:

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Superfund Records Center

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EPA / OII web site: www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sfund/oii